SALLIE'S BOY.

BY JESSIE M. E. SAXBY,

Author of "Dora Coyne," "Lindeman Brothers," etc.

"The Silver winding through the valley."

CHAPTER VII.

"A SINGLE MURMUR IN THE BREAST."

When Sallie, and frightened Clara and Ben, reached the gates of Oaklea, they encountered Fairly and the doctor, so all entered the house together, and proceeded at once to the study. There they came upon a pitiable scene of confusion.

Mr. Linton had been raised from the floor where he had fallen, and was lying motionless on the sofa, a litter of papers and specimens scattered around him. Aunt Julia, Annie, the maids, were grouped about the room sobbing and ejaculating; only blind Roger seemed to have retained the least self-possession, and he knelt by the sofa holding his father's hand, and listening to his long-drawn breathings. But all was changed when Sallie and the doctor appeared, and before long the study was cleared of the helpless crew, and converted into an orderly sick room.

Fortunately, the attack was not very severe, and before long Mr. Linton was recovered enough to recognise those about him. His eyes wandered listlessly from face to face till they lighted on Sallie; then a smile of content slowly flitted across his face, and he put out his hand to her.

"You are better, father dear," she said, with infinite tenderness; and then he found strength to articulate with a certain amount of coherency, "Thank God, *you* are here, Sallie."

And there Sallie remained that day and many days, for even the Dragon saw and acknowledged that their "Queen" of olden times was the only person capable of restoring equanimity and composure to the family.

The anxiety regarding her father, and the close attention he required, as well as the perpetual demands of brothers and sisters, kept Sallie's thoughts from being too much engrossed by care on Hubert's account.

He wrote to her frequently, though his letters were short and by no means satisfactory; but his young wife was thankful for these. She was learning to tone down her expectation of "great things" from him to a level far, far below the height on which he stood before marriage. It is a curious fact that while a woman does not disappoint the man's ideal of her, she holds his affection.

On the other hand, though a *common-place* woman ceases to love when she ceases to idealise, a high-souled creature usually brings more devotion after she finds her idol to be made of clay than she did when he appeared everything that is noble in her eyes.

Sallie Linton had been formed of very fine metal indeed, and Sallie Holmes was not less so.

There had never been a doubt in her mind that Hubert was "the one man in all the world" for her, and she had thought herself blessed indeed in his love.

When she woke to find that love to be something less than the unalloyed passion of her own pure soul, and her hero something less than her maiden dreams had supposed, she had no selfish regrets. She never felt one tendril of her affections loosen its hold on him. On the contrary, his very need of self-less devotion seemed to evoke from her an added strength of love.

That they were apart for even one day was not by her desire; that anything—shame, or sin, or misfortune—should ever keep them apart would never be Sallie's fault. A thought of him went through all her thoughts, and her prayers on his account were ceaseless.

So the days drifted on into weeks, and Oaklea became accustomed to its master being an invalid seldom able to leave his study, but content there, shut out from the world and surrounded by his books and specimens. Then, when a certain routine had set in, and the household had fallen into something more depressing than even the jars of late years, Fairly brought forward his scheme again.

The father had never offered any objection to it; he did not see why the brother and sister should not follow their own ideas. When the matter was once more brought before him, he said, "Yes, yes; why not?" but Sallie gently reminded him that though the young couple were eager to work for themselves, and meant to live in a very quiet way, they still must have a fixed income at starting, and for a few years.

"Find out what they cost at home, and give them that," Mr. Linton replied; but when Sallie showed him that the wants of a separate establishment would require more money than that, Aunt Julia electrified everybody by saying: "You give them, as you say, what they cost you at present, and *I'll* give what is required extra."

"You!" Clara exclaimed, in utter astonishment; for she knew herself to be the Dragon's pet aversion.

"You, Aunt Julia!" cried Fairly.

"Yes, *me!* and see you make good use of all you get."

"That is too good, too kind of you," the young scapegraces stammered. "We didn't expect, we haven't——"

"Oh, hoity-toity! Take what's offered you, and be thankful! Don't you see—I shall be—I shall be glad to help, and so—so be rid of you!"

The Dragon jerked out those words with a glistening of the eyes, and general disturbance of manner which led more than one of those present to think that her "bark was worse than her bite."

Her offer was finally accepted with gratitude, and ere long Fairly and Clara departed, and Oaklea was much more dreary without them—though they had been the most disturbing element in it at all times.

Sallie was sitting with her father one evening, patiently arranging the sheets of a paper on "Beetles" which the naturalist had written, and "mixed" after his usual manner. The house was very quiet—folks had been less noisy since his illness—and he said in an abstracted way—

"The children are not so troublesome when you are here. It is like old times having you back. They always obeyed their little queen! Sallie, my dear, how do you do it? *I* never could, neither can Julia. There is no quarrelling and distracting noise when *you* are about."

"Oh, father," she answered in a low voice, and with her head bent, "it's not that. It's because—so many have—gone. There's only Ben and myself in the house at this moment, and I—I don't belong to the house."

He looked at her as if not following what she said very clearly, and Sallie could scarcely keep back her tears; but after a moment's silence he remarked slowly, "I don't quite understand. Gone! Where are the children?"

She smiled then, feeling she *must*, and replied cheerfully—

"They are insulted if we call them 'children' now, father, and they've gone—some of them—to live their lives as men and women. Aunt Julia has taken Roger out for a drive, and you remember Annie left for Lady Hilton's yesterday. And Ben and I were never very noisy animals, were we?"

Just then the door was put softly ajar, and Ben's fair curls appeared, to Sallie's delight.

"Come in, my pet; come here. We need you," she exclaimed, with unwonted impulsiveness; and Benjie came to her side at once.

It had never struck Sallie till just then how much he had changed from the clinging "baby boy" she left on her wedding-day. He was growing tall and thoughtful, with a self-reliant air that obtruded itself on her consciousness all at once, making her aware that soon even the Baby would be "growed up."

"Why, Ben, Baby, what a tall boy you are!" she exclaimed, as he came and stood with his arm round her neck. "I must not call you my *baby* now."

"But I shall always call you 'Mam-lee,'" said Ben.

"Yes, he grows," Mr. Linton remarked; and glancing up at his wife's picture, hanging over the chair where Sallie sat, he added, "The boy is very like his mother. So are you, Sallie. My dear, you remind me a good deal of your mother."

"Mother to me," Ben whispered in her ear, in his soft, old-fashioned way, that always stirred the deepest feelings in Sallie's breast; and their father overhearing the words—not meant, indeed, for his ears—remarked in the same half-absent manner, which he had used since his illness far more than formerly—

"Your sister has been very good to you, my boy. Yes, Sallie was in her mother's place to you, and to all. I have sometimes desired that Hubert Holmes had sought some other wife than our Sallie. It made a—difference; yes, a great—difference here."

He was really not addressing them, but thinking aloud, and neither took notice of his words, though Ben observed that Sallie's head drooped low, and she drew his hand closer round her while their father spoke.

"The house is very quiet now, I observe," Mr. Linton went on, after a pause. "It is pleasant, and yet—the children's voices were pleasant, too, when they were not quarrelling. And I find Julia trying at times. A most excellent person, my sister Julia; and she has had sorrows of her own, but she's trying at times. She does not know a beetle from a spider—My dears" (suddenly becoming alert in speech, and all present regarding the theme of his conversation), "will you believe it? Your Aunt Julia swept out the cobwebs from the corner here, over my sofa, yesterday. I had been so carefully observing the habits of those spiders, and had taught some of them to come to my fingers for morsels of meat. In one moment, when I was airing myself in the next room, your aunt came here with a broom——"

A hope-forsaken sigh told what misery the Dragon and her broom had inflicted, and Sallie hastened to impart comfort by suggesting that possibly the spiders had not shared the fate of their webs, and might return to weave more.

The naturalist looked up, and doubtfully shook his head.

"If they survive," he said, "they will be more wise than to return. Ah! my dear Sallie, it was not so when you were Queen of Oaklea. Everything, from the most rare zoophite to the most common weed, from an arrow-head to a marble, *she* stigmatises as 'trumpery.' She has a most painful faculty for 'cleaning up' and putting in order—at least, what she calls putting in order, but what I call the very reverse. With a whisk and a flutter of dusters she makes everything disappear — absolutely disappear, my dears! I should not at all wonder if it is her faculty for cleaning and clearing which has made the children—disappear. Yes! My specimens disappear, and why not my children?"

"What delightful letters Roy writes," Sallie said then, wishful to draw him into another channel. "I never read anything more charming than his description of those Zulu boys. I think he is filling Ben's head with so many fancies about South Africa, that he will go there, too; eh, Ben?"

"I shall want to go to Roy, but not because of 'fancies,'" said the boy, gravely. "I want to have a lot of money, all of my own, and Africa is a good place for getting money. Roy says he shall be quite rich soon."

"What a mercenary Ben you've growed!" Sallie exclaimed, playfully; yet her heart was aching. "And why do you want to have a lot of money?" she added; while their father asked absently, "Why, indeed, want a lot of money? Money is not much pleasure when all's said and counted."

"I could help— so many people, if I had money," said Ben.

"Boys always have so many ideas," murmured Mr. Linton. "Ideas! always ideas! I think I had a great many ideas myself when I was a boy, and some of them were about money, too. But I found there was not much satisfaction in the pursuit of wealth. A mere idea, and it faded, with other ideas. I have learned that ideas which pertain to the earth are—not satisfying."

CHAPTER VIII.

"SHALL LOVE BE BLAMED FOR WANT OF FAITH?"

A FEW weeks later, Sallie was at the Manor reading a letter just received from her husband. There was a tremulous delight in her eyes, blended with some trouble. Hubert had written that he would be home in a few days, but the terms in which he announced his intention led her to fear that his reasons for so doing were not all pleasant ones. Still Sallie was fain to put aside foreboding thoughts, and dwell upon the mere fact that he would soon be with her.

"This dear, beautiful old place," she murmured to herself, "is looking so lovely and peaceful in its autumn dress, I am sure Hubert will be glad to rest at the Manor. Perhaps he is even now growing weary of the exciting, never-satisfied kind of life he leads abroad, and the attractions of his English home may at last be enough to keep him here. Oh! I hope so! Oh! how I pray it may be so!"

She went to the window, which commanded a fine view of the grounds, the majestic Snafell towering above Wately, with the Silver winding down the mountain sides and through the valley. A mellow sunlight was diffusing its rich beauty among the foliage, calling forth the rare tints of russet crimson, orange and brown, which itself had evolved from the green leaves of summer. The meadows were yellow with harvest bounty; the river sparkled in the light; the filmy wreaths of blue smoke curled up from the village gables, till they blended with the clouds stooping to the earth—"the curtains of nature gathered around the cradle of humanity," Sallie called those tender clouds.

"I have seen many beautiful scenes," she thought, "since Hubert took me a-wandering, but I do not think I have looked upon anything more sweet, more like one's dreams of Paradise, than this fair home of ours. It rests the soul, as well as the body, to dwell in such a place."

Then some train of thought—or more likely the Silver itself, looking just as it had done when she carried Benjie over the stepping-stones—led her to recall that hour, and the words her little brother had spoken; led her also to recall the thoughts which had been hers when the child prattled in his tender, serious way; and Sallie sighed—

"Poor little man! he hoped there might be a great many large stones and deep water in my way; so that he might prove his strength and love by bearing me—bearing my—my burden! Oh! and I thought then of—someone else—doing that. I did not dream then of *now*. Yet, thank God, there *is* Someone—Someone stronger than either brother or husband—to bear me up. Yes; even though my burden is greatly of my own making. If I had not left them all at Oaklea things might not have felt so hard. *That* was selfish of me; and every time I go there it hurts me to think of it. And yet sometimes I feel that Hubert would have been far further wrong if I had not been with him. I hope—yes, I *know*—I have helped him, and sometimes kept him from a foolishness; and I have a conviction that I shall bring him back to his better self ere long, because the prayer of faith is honoured by Him who heareth always."

Her thoughts became more tranquil and hope-inspired after these musings, and Sallie set herself to having everything about the place in a high state of comfort and beauty against the Squire's return.

His monetary difficulties had not yet affected his home-ménage, and the Manor showed no signs of the straitened circumstances of its master. Even Sallie had no conception how much he was embarrassed; and her complete ignorance of the ruin hanging over him relieved her from a certain restraint she must have otherwise felt. She was ready with the brightest of smiles, the tenderest of words, the warmest of welcomes when he arrived, and Hubert felt his laden spirit revive in her presence.

"Fair and good as ever, sweet wife!" he exclaimed, as he drew her to his arms and looked into the candid eyes lifted full of love to his face.

"I wish *I* could pay *you* a compliment about your looks in return, Hubert," she made answer; "but, darling"—and she took his face between her hands, and gazed yearningly upon it—"you look so thin, and pale, and sad. This is only the shadow of my bonnie Squire. Yet I am thankful, so thankful and glad, that you have come."

"Glad and thankful for even a shadow, Sallie?"

"Oh, yes, and I shall take care that you shall be the Hubert of old, the sunshine as well as the shadow, before you have been home very long. Home! oh, do you not realise now what a sweet word that is?"

He did not speak, but averted his eyes, and a cloud settled on his brow which she was quick to observe. She nestled closer into his arms and whispered—

"Dear, do you remember once—when I was peeping in at the Manor gates—you said to me, 'My home is *nearly* perfect'? And when you brought me here, brought me into this very room, your happy wife, you said, 'My home is perfect

now.' While you have been away, Hubert, I have been hoping and praying that you were to come HOME with that same thought, and that we should stay——"

He started from her, interrupting her words with a gesture almost fierce in its expression of anguish.

"Don't, for heaven's sake don't talk like that," he muttered, in broken, husky tones; and then he got up and strode across to the window, and stood there staring at the landscape with eyes that saw its beauty only to curse the evil which made the sight of his father's home a bitterness to his heart.

"Shall I tell her now, and have done with it at once?" he asked himself, as he stood motionless, and felt the silence in the room more oppressive than any upbraiding words could have been.

He turned to confess all; but Sallie, sitting where he had left her, white and graceful as a lily, young, and thinking no evil, "fair and good," as he had said, gazing silently at him, too shocked to feel hurt, too loving to ask a question—he could not bring himself to break her faith and shiver every hope she had cherished.

"I am afraid I frightened you. I'm so very sorry, darling," he stammered, "but the fact is my nerves are a bit off the balance, and it—it worried me to hear you talk like that, because I shan't be able to stay very long here. And, as you say, the Manor does look perfect. It's very pretty and peaceful. Yes, peaceful, that's the word that fits the old place, but I wish—I do wish with all my heart that I could stay and rest at home."

"Hubert, are you going to leave me again?" Sallie asked, rising slowly, and coming towards him with every particle of colour gone from her face. "Hubert, are you going to leave me again?"

"No, sweet, no! Don't look so miserable, wifie." He took her cold hands, and kissed her again and again, calling her by the fondest names, and feeling more remorse for his selfishness than he had ever dreamed he could feel about anything. "I shall not leave you," he went on, "I only meant that I couldn't stay here. You will come with me when I go away. It was by no means pleasant living without you at Baden during the last few months, and I'm not going to try it again. You will come with me to Paris presently, and when luck takes the right turn, we'll come back to the Manor, and be happy ever afterwards, eh, Sallie?"

She could not speak even then, though some of her colour came back when she knew they were not to be parted; but the shock to her faith-inspired dream of home made perfect at last rendered her speechless and stunned. She did not know till her vision was so ruthlessly riven asunder how much she had been dwelling upon it, how unconsciously her hopes had all clustered around it, and built themselves a nest within its aerial festoons.

Only God can comprehend the plight of a woman who has unwittingly built upon such a structure, and finds it nothing better than a cloud which the winds disperse at their will.

Only God can comfort the woman at such a time. While her husband was speaking, and she was rallying her courage and trust, Sallie was aware of some old lines running through her mind lending themselves to her position—

"Oh, strength so dearly trusted!
Oh, clasp of human love!
Frail reed we fondly lean on,
How feeble dost thou prove!
A surer faith unshaken,
The failing heart demands;
A voice from higher regions,
A grasp from unseen Hands."

It was well for Sallie that she had not deferred seeking Divine aid till the hour of extremity came, as so many do. She had always been in the habit of bringing her cares to the Father; and though (as we have seen) sometimes she failed to follow implicitly the dictates of conscience; though strong temptation closed her ears now and again to the counsel of the Unseen; yet she "repented and struggled and came back," and was never truly at peace when not conscious of being within the covert of His wings.

Instinctively she sought in that bewildering moment for the invisible Hand, and was keenly sure that God would support her through whatever trials might come. That Hubert's wrong-doing had become far more serious than she had believed possible, his action and haggard looks betrayed. That terrible trouble was hanging over them she did not doubt; but her faith rose up to meet whatever might come.

So she stood quiet and silent till her husband's broken sentences came to an end. Then she cast her tender gaze upon him and said, "God bless you, dear."

"There! there!" he exclaimed, somewhat relieved that she was so quiet. "It will all come right when fortune's wheel takes the right turn, as it is bound to do soon; as it always does, you know."

"It will all come right, Hubert, my love, my love, when you are trusting to God and not to fortune."

"Fortune, I confess, has treated me shabbily as yet; but by-and-by it will be different. Depend upon that. I can't explain business matters to you, my dear; for women don't understand business; and, sweet, you have always shown a charming simplicity in such matters. But I shall have some talk with Heddle" (his man of business) "and others, and I expect the—the present difficulty can be smoothed a bit. Things are in a horrible mess, I must own, but it might be worse, and anyhow you can set your mind at rest on the main point. We are not going to part again in a hurry."

"For that I am most thankful; but, Hubert, father and the others used to say I wasn't a bad hand at business. They thought differently from you, dear, in that. You see, I had to attend to father's business matters. Couldn't you tell me some of your worries? I could maybe help you with them, and anyhow I can sympathise. I can share your trouble, as your wife should." *(To be continued.)*

FREEING THE BIRDS AT CAPRI.

AT the pleasant Lenten season,
When o'er Capri's southern land,
In the new and sweet spring sunshine,
Vines are budding, flowers expand;

On the morn of Easter Sunday,
Children to the church repair,
Grasping each a branch of olive,
Guarding each a bird with care.

"See my bough," cries chattering Anna,
"Decked with bows and sweetmeats gay!
Not another child is holding
Such a pretty branch to-day."

Brown-eyed Lucia chides her softly:
"'Tis not for our own delight
We have decked them, but to make them
Fair in God's most holy sight.

"On the morn of Easter Sunday."

"God it is who sends the sunshine,
That our corn and vines may grow,
And we bring our gifts and garlands
Thus our gratitude to show."

Winding down the grassy hillside,
Little Victor cries: "See! there,
In that mossy dell of violets,
This my bird I did ensnare.

"Pretty bird! I've fed him daily,
Tame and gentle does he grow;
Tell me once again the story
Why our birdies all must go."

"Long ago," the sister answers,
"From the sea that laves our isle,
Pirates came, like cruel monsters,
Wont to seize their prey with guile."

Speaking thus, the church they enter,
And on every childish brow
Falls a soft and chastened reverence,
As within the shrine they bow.

Sudden from the pealing organ
Sounds a loud and joyful strain:
Loose the little feathered prisoners!
Let them feel their wings again!

"Christian men, their helpless captives,
Pined in slavery sore and long,
Till some kindly hand would seek them,
Eager to redress their wrong.

"At the blessed Lenten season
Did they set these captives free;
So, with tiny feathered prisoners,
Now we keep the memory."

Up they dart, with joyous flutterings,
Out, through window and through door;
Till they find blue sky and sunshine,
And glad songs of freedom pour.

Quaint and curious island custom!
Yet some beauty there we find;
Kindly deeds of long-past ages
It is well to bring to mind.

In the ear of listening childhood,
Who may know what echoes start?
Binding man to man in mercy,
Keeping heart in tune with heart.

KATE T. SIZER.

THE SENSIBLE USE OF PAPER PATTERNS.

BY J. E. DAVIS.

(*Concluded from page 40.*)

THE pattern having been very carefully checked and prepared, we are ready to use it; and after taking such care in preparing it, would it not be a thousand pities if we did not use it well? Accuracy in transferring the lines of the pattern to the lining, and care lest these transferred lines vanish before they have fulfilled their purpose, are the main requisites. To transfer the lines of the pattern to the lining several plans are resorted to, but the tracing-wheel is undoubtedly the best. The tracing-wheel is a little "pricker," costing about a shilling, which is driven round the edge of the pattern and pricks it through to the lining in a outline series of tiny holes, something like the perforation between postage stamps, but not quite so close and deep. Two yards of lining will be required for a bodice, and it is best to select a plain, self-coloured one, such as slate or grey, as the patterned ones do not show the pricks so clearly. Still, if you have patience and good eyes, you can use the wheel on any striped or flowered lining; but I would like to warn you against two kinds, which are equally abominable. One is unbleached or grey calico, which shows nothing but coloured chalks or ink, and the other is a kind of grey lining made from black and white threads, which is, I think, worse than the grey calico, as the mingled threads prevent anything but a strong contrasting colour from showing upon it. Having selected your lining, you need a board under it, as the pricking-wheel would mark a table-top if used upon it. Lay the lining (which is always sold doubled) doubled on the board, and on it arrange the pattern, leaving room to allow an ample margin for turnings everywhere. There should be as nearly as possible two inches of turnings on the front—one inch on all the body seams and half an inch all round the armhole and round the neck. Pin each piece of the pattern into place through the double lining with at least two or three pins, smoothing it carefully out and not allowing any creases in either lining or pattern, then cut each piece out with its proper allowance for turnings, and wheel the outline through on the board. *Don't cut out the darts* (or breast-pleats), even if they *are* cut out of the pattern, only wheel round the edges, and the same with the shaped front line. If you have not a pricking-wheel, use a stiletto, or the point of a sharp pair of scissors, pricking a hole at every half inch round the edge; but the wheel makes light work of what is otherwise a heavy and wearisome task. Mark out all the outline, quite close to the edge of the pattern, and mark the waist also, and the little snips which on paper patterns indicate where the pieces are to be joined together. Next proceed to cut the stuff. I am supposing my readers will be sensible enough not to start on a velvet or any fancy material, but will choose a plain, double-width stuff, of which from $1\frac{1}{4}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ yards will make a nice bodice. If the stuff is single width, fold it down the length and lay the pieces of the pattern upon it, beginning with the fronts. Endeavour to lay the pieces with the tops one way. I object very much to reversing the pieces if it can be avoided, as there is always a chance of the material showing differently when the dress is made up. I like the material doubled, and all the pieces of lining (with the pattern still pinned to them) laid upon it—it prevents the common amateur mistake of cutting two pieces for the one side of the dress. Cut all the pieces of material out round the outside of the lining, and then prepare for the most tiresome, but, for all that, the most important part of

the making—the tacking out, on which the preservation of the fitting lines depends The pieces of material and also the pieces of the lining are in pairs. Unpin them, and lay the two pieces of stuff face down on the table; then on each piece lay its own lining, face up. Take care each pair of pieces are paired, or laid opposite, for if the two are laid the same way they will be for the same side of the dress. Pin each lining and stuff together, and then with thin white cotton tack them together all round the outline, in the pricks made by the wheel or stiletto, making the stitches half an inch long, and tacking every line marked in the diagram. These tacking threads (which join each piece of material to its own proper piece of lining) are in the fitting lines, and the threads should never be removed till the dress is nearly, if not quite, completed. When all the pieces are tacked out, tack the pieces together, beginning at the centre of the back, and putting the snips together carefully. Close the breast-pleats by the tacked out fitting lines, and tack the dress together in the fitting lines also; then try it on inside out—that is to say, let the turnings be outside.

Pin the front line together at the neck, then at the bust, then at the waist, lifting it a little to bring it into place, as fronts always appear a little long when you are pinning them on, then close the remainder of the front lines together, and pull the whole dress well down into the waist, especially at the back, where it is naturally inclined to be short-waisted, through being pulled forward and together when the front was being pinned. See then if the back is the right length and the right width—if the front is long enough to the waist and the chest right, the armhole close-fitting, and if all the parts be close to the body without wrinkles. It will not be absolutely smooth, as there will be a certain amount of pull across from the tackings, which are naturally rather large stitches, but as long as they are not positive wrinkles the machining will clear them off. Do not attempt to pin or pinch them away—that is fatal. If the pattern was the right bust and waist-measure at first, and all the corrections have been carefully made and carried out in the tracing, the bodice should fit close, but not tight, and may then be machined down on the tacking lines. If it fits quite tight—as tight as you would like the completed dress to fit—it will not meet at the front when it has been machined, and a trifling allowance must be made for this, especially if the material is thick. If, on the other hand, it is really too slack, the machining should be done just inside the lines to tighten each seam slightly, and if the bust is right and only the waist too loose, the machining should be commenced on the lines and carried in slightly as it approaches and passes the waist. The machining should be so managed as to make the waist rather too tight, and the dress then taken and well stretched across to make it come to size again.

The fitting lines tacked round the neck show exactly where to put on the collar, and those round the armholes exactly where to put in the sleeves, while the front tacked lines show exactly where to arrange the buttons and button-holes. Probably I shall on some future occasion go thoroughly into the matter of inside finishing; for the present I can only hope that the hints I have given may prove useful to those who have found the management of the pattern their weak point.

SOME EASTER CUSTOMS.

BY THE EDITOR.

THROUGHOUT the whole of Christendom, Easter has always been considered one of the most sacred festivals of the Church, and by nearly all the old writers it is called "The queen of festivals." Commemorating, as it does, the resurrection of our Saviour, on the third day after that crucifixion which had brought grief and dismay into the hearts of His followers, it was natural that the early Christians should unite in observing the day with every sign of joy and thankfulness. In later times, disputes arose as to the right day on which the festival should be held, and then, as now, when there was a difference of opinion on any religious subject, feeling was apt to wax warm, and on this question long and bitter controversies ensued. The result of the dispute was, that the Eastern (or Greek) Church, and the Western (or Roman) Church, determined that they would celebrate Easter on different days.

This was soon found to be a very undesirable state of affairs, when, as in our own country, the Christians of the North belonged to the Greek Church, whilst those in the South belonged to the Roman Church. So a synod to consider this question was held at Whitby Abbey, during the time of the Abbess Hilda. It was decided then and there, that henceforth Easter should be observed in England on the day fixed by the Roman Church, viz: "The Sunday following the full moon, which happens upon, or next after, March 21st; but if the full moon happens on Sunday, then the next Sunday is to be observed."

In our Protestant England, we do not celebrate this joyful day with the religious ceremonies and processions that are seen in other countries; our churches, indeed, are made beautiful by the flowers that are so typical of the resurrection, but we have few curious customs amongst us, and none that are at all universal, with the exception, perhaps, of that of giving Easter eggs, which has been as popular here as in other countries. As far back as Edward I.'s time, we read in the Royal Roll of an entry of eighteen-pence for the purchase of four hundred eggs, to be given away at Easter.

A patriotic and interesting use was made of this custom in 1872 by that portion of the province of Alsace which was not annexed by Germany. A couple of young men in holiday dress, and bearing a large basket, went round from door to door, begging Easter eggs, which were to be sold, and the money devoted towards payment of the fine imposed upon the French by the victorious Germans. It is said that never before were eggs so plentiful nor so prettily decorated, and the result was, that a considerable sum of money was raised by this ingenious plan.

Easter is certainly celebrated with much pomp in Roman Catholic countries, but it is a still greater festival in the Eastern Church, which seems to unite with it many of our Christmas and New Year's Day customs; and in Russia it is said that no one has seen St. Petersburg who has not been there at Easter.

The Greek Church has always been very strict about fasting, and instead of forty days, their Lent lasts for seven weeks! and during that time not only is meat forbidden, but also eggs, milk, butter and sugar. With the prospect of so long a fast before them, it is not surprising that there is some extra feasting, and the week before it begins there is in Russia a sort of carnival—a season of great indulgence known as the *Masslanilza,* or Butter-week. During that limited time the Russians endeavour to consume all the butter they would ordinarily use in the seven weeks. The standard dish upon all Russian tables at this time is *Blinni,* a kind of pancake mixed up with butter, fried in butter, and eaten with melted butter.

Russian peasants waiting to have their food blessed.

The weary weeks of fasting which succeed the "Butter-week," draw at length to a close, and the egg-market begins to rise, for it is the custom for every one to make presents of Easter eggs, and they of course vary in value; some being the ordinary eggs coloured and ornamented in various ways, whilst exceedingly pretty imitation eggs are made in a great variety of material; those made in the imperial glass works are beautifully ornamented with cut flowers and figures, and are given as presents by the royal family.

On Easter eve, the churches are all crowded with worshippers, who wait in a "dim religious light" until the last stroke of the midnight bell, when the lamps are lighted, the doors of the sanctuary are thrown open, and loud and clear rises the Easter song, "Christ is risen!" "Christ is risen from the dead!" Every one in the congregation grasps the hand of any one who is near; everybody kisses everybody with whom he has the slightest acquaintance; the church bells ring joyfully, cannon are fired, and rockets are let off in the streets, all testifying to the universal rejoicing on Easter Day.

The Easter Kiss.

Both inside and outside the churches, food and household utensils are brought for the priest to bless. The pavement has rows of dishes, etc., placed so that the priest may pass between and sprinkle the holy water on each person and dish whilst pronouncing the benediction.

After all the religious duties have been performed, then come the festivities and congratulations. The amount of kissing that characterises the Easter festival in Russia, is simply amazing. For instance, the Czar not only kisses the members of his own family and court, but his household attendants, the sentinel on duty, the officers of the guard on parade, and a selected number of private soldiers! And throughout the empire, everybody salutes anybody he knows, with an Easter kiss, and the joyful exclamation, "Christ is risen!"

Easter at Jerusalem. The Holy Fire.

There is one very capital law in Russia that comes into

active force at this season, when eating and drinking are often carried to excess. If any person, either man or woman, is found drunk in the streets, that person has to spend a certain number of hours in sweeping them.

But with the thought of Easter comes naturally the memory of that eastern land where, on the first day of the week, the sorrowing women heard the glad and wonderful words, "He is risen!" and Christians of all denominations have ever loved to visit the scenes where their Lord lived and died, and rose again from the dead. This feeling is naturally strong at the Easter festival, and our readers will be interested in the accompanying sketch of the scene at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, during the ceremonial known as the "Holy Fire," which has been thus graphically described by an eye-witness:—

"All day on Friday, pilgrims from all parts of Palestine have been arriving for this great ceremony. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre is left open all night, and hundreds of the pilgrims camp on the flags. From early on the morning of Saturday, till late in the afternoon, the building is filled with closely packed pilgrims, becoming more and more fanatical every moment. Shouting, yelling, clasping of hands, and dancing up and down, and to amuse themselves more fully, many chasing one another over the heads of the densely-packed crowd, wrestling and struggling back into the mass, as they are tripped up by some friend below. The Moslem guard, though much stronger in numbers to-day, seem to have but little control of the mob and threaten to use the butt-ends of their muskets. Refreshment is served round in the shape of water, and four or five will fight for a little, to wet their parched throats.

"After a procession of bishops and priests thrice around the building, the Patriarch enters the Sepulchre. Now the noise becomes greater and greater; the shouts and cries are quite deafening, making the place more like an *inferno* than a Church of Christ. A priest, who has been standing near the two oval windows in the side of the Sepulchre, from out of which the fire is expected, thrusts in his hand, and brings forth a lighted taper, and immediately rushes through the lane the soldiers try to keep for him, and disappears into the interior of the church. The Holy Fire now issues from the holes in the walls, and hundreds of hands are stretched out, as they frantically try to light their candles at the flame. One man has succeeded in igniting his taper, and in struggling through the crowd it suddenly flickers and goes out. He dashes the smouldering candle into the Sepulchre, and rushes out of the church raving. By this time one candle has ignited the other, and the crowd below is one mass of moving flame. From every nook and corner of the church, from dome to floor, creeps the hissing noise of burning wax, until the scene beneath is almost obliterated by smoke and flames. So ends the great ceremony of the Holy Fire."

Unhappily the influx of pilgrims to the Holy City generally results in some religious disturbances, and the joy of Easter is sadly spoiled by the petty jealousies and quarrels of those who call themselves followers of "The Prince of Peace."

KATINKA'S BETROTHAL.

BY MARY E. ROPES,

Author of "The Fortunes of the Frejhaldts," "Prince and Page," "My Golden Ship," etc.

(Continued from page 46.)

SERGIUS drove to the Dolgaretskys', but the servants told him that the Barrin and Barrina were again taking their afternoon nap; and that Katerina Gregoriovna was out, had gone in her own little sledge, driving herself, only her big dog Neptune with her.

In such things as these the girl was wholly unlike Russian girls in general. Stimulated by the independence and courage of several of her foreign friends, she had some time ago determined not to be fettered and restrained by mere conventional rules, in such matters as her daily exercise and out-door amusements.

A slow walk, with a maid or man-servant behind her, or a drive in the closed carriage or double sledge with her mother, paying formal visits, was intolerable to her; and little by little, her quiet persistence, and the ingenious way in which she availed herself of every loophole of escape from the rules and customs that she hated, were at length rewarded by success. Her father, who idolised her, and was anxious that his child should have everything to make her contented and happy, gave a standing order that she was to do just as she pleased, so far as her out-door amusements were concerned. He bought her a pair of silver-mounted skates, on which she often glided for miles on the frozen lake. He procured for her a tiny sledge, with warm wraps of bear-skin, and a swift but docile Finnish pony, which no one save Katinka was ever suffered to drive. For the summer she had a saddle-horse and pony-carriage, also a light boat of her own, in which she rowed about the lake, visiting the little islands within reach, and becoming familiar with the lovely spots and places of interest that abounded in the neighbourhood.

Nor were Katinka's expeditions always undertaken solely for her own amusement. Summer and winter she was often to be found at the cottages of the poor in the surrounding villages, and the sick were her especial charge. Wherever she went among them she brought comfort, and help, and cheer, not only by her kind and gentle words, but by the substantial help she was able to render.

On this particular day Katinka had gone out partly to escape, if possible, from her own thoughts. The girl was very unhappy, for although, owing to what Sergey had told her about Nicolai's fortune, her father and mother had given their consent to the postponement of the betrothal ceremony, and had persuaded the parents of Nicolai to do the same, yet still Katinka could not feel herself free or safe; and this was a sore trial, to say nothing of her affection for Sergey, which she was almost sure he returned, and yet of which neither could speak because of the proposed tie so hateful to them both.

Nor had Nicolai ever behaved towards her at all like a lover, and she could not but feel that his indifference to her was only surpassed by hers to him. She had seen hardly anything of him, and even since the day when the arrangements for the betrothal were made, he had only called once,

and then had acted so strangely, and had been so formal and constrained, that Katinka had felt a real aversion to him added to her former indifference.

Katinka remained out some little time, paid one or two visits to poor people, and turned her pony's head towards home just as the short winter twilight dropped like a curtain over the earth.

On reaching the house she found that her parents, who had a dinner engagement about five miles away, had already started. She went to her room and tried to read, but a restless fit was upon her, and she did not seem to understand or take in a single page.

"I cannot bear this!" she exclaimed, getting up and beginning to pace up and down. Then going to the window she looked out.

The twilight had deepened; it was a glorious winter evening, whose darkness was made beautiful by the clear radiance of moon and stars. Not a breath of wind was stirring, and the broad lake lay a smooth, shining expanse under the jewelled heavens.

"I will go out and skate," said Katinka to herself. "When I am fairly tired, perhaps I shall be able to sit still."

She took a hasty meal, then dressed herself in her short, warm skating dress and furred jacket, her fur-topped, high Polish boots, her cap and muff. Then calling her dog, and giving him her skates to carry, slung on a strap, she ran out of the house and down to the lake-side. There she fastened on her skates, and lightly stepping down from the bank on to the pure ice, she darted swiftly away, her big St. Bernard, Neptune, galloping beside her.

The clear cold seemed to brace her nerves as she flew along. Her restlessness was soothed, and the solemn peace of nature in its winter sleep brought thoughts which were quieting in their influence. After about half-an-hour of rapid exercise, she felt better, body and mind, and turned her face homewards.

On nearing the bank where she was about to take off her skates, she was startled by Neptune, who had suddenly come close to her side, uttering a deep warning growl.

She followed the direction of his eyes, and saw, under the shadow of some snow-laden trees that stood in a tall clump at the margin of the lake, two figures.

Involuntarily she paused. Apparently the people—a man and woman—did not hear her. They were standing with their backs turned towards her, and seemed deep in conversation.

All of a sudden, Neptune gave a loud sonorous bark, and as he did so the two shadowed forms sprang apart. The man was on skates, and shooting from the bank with an agile bound, he skimmed off across the lake at a rapid rate; but the woman remained in the same place, and seemed to be watching the skater; so that Katinka came quite close before she appeared to perceive her. Then, as she moved out of the shadow, the moonlight fell upon her face, and Katinka recognised her as Minna Frommath, the daughter of a Finnish widow who had been reduced in circumstances, and though by birth and education a lady, had been obliged, through poverty, to live in one of the cottages of the neighbouring village, like the peasants. Minna was the widow's only child. She had a lovely, fair, flower-like face, crowned with a wealth of flaxen hair, and lit up with a pair of sweet blue eyes; while her tall, slender figure had a willowy grace which even the poorness of her dress could not disguise.

Katinka had often helped Minna and her mother with gifts of clothing, and had sent them books to read, and good things at Christmas and Easter, so the girl was well known to her, and she could not help wondering who the young fellow could be who had escaped, as though afraid of being seen, at the first approach of a footstep.

Minna made no attempt to run away, and as Katinka stepped on to the bank, the girl came nearer, and said gently, "Allow me to take off your skates, Katerina Gregoriovna."

"Nay, Minna, I can do it myself, thank you," replied Katia; then seeing that the girl's cheeks were wet with tears, she said gently—

"What troubles you, Minna? Tell me, and let me help you if I can."

"You are very good; you have ever been good to me," replied the young girl; "but even you cannot help me; no one can; no one!"

With a gentle inclination of her beautiful head, Minna turned away down a path to the village, while Katinka took off her skates and went up to the house, her own troubles for the moment forgotten in compassion for Minna, and in wondering who the young man could be who had so abruptly parted from the Finnish maiden, and so rapidly skimmed the frozen lake.

"I thought there were but two who could skate thus," said Katinka to herself; "but two, at least, in our neighbourhood; and these two are brothers. One of them is Nicolai Kartinsky, and the other—the other is Sergey."

CHAPTER III.

THE MYSTERY OF OAK ISLAND.

As time passed, Sergey began to be increasingly uneasy about his brother. Nicolai's depression and disquiet grew, until it was evident enough to any who watched him that the burden he had to bear—whatever it might be—had become well-nigh insupportable.

Sergey felt that this state of things could not continue, and feared that unless Nicolai's mind and heart could be in some measure relieved of their load of care, he would be taking some desperate step which must bring with it pain, disgrace, and perhaps even public punishment.

To find out what this burden was, that had so crushed Nicolai, and to discover some means of helping him, was now Sergey's earnest wish, but so far he had watched in vain for an opportunity of speaking with him quietly. Nicolai avoided being with him alone, and Sergey could not converse freely with him in the presence of others.

"Is Nicolai Ivanitch at home?" asked Sergey one night, when the servant opened the door to him on his return from Wiborg, where his father had a branch house of business.

"No, Sergey Ivanitch, your brother has not yet come in, and the order has just been given to hand dinner, and not wait for him."

Sergey sat down to the table with his parents, but he had no appetite, and course after course of the lavish meal went away untasted by him.

"What ails thee, my son?" asked his mother. "Surely thou art ill. I have noticed of late that thou hast not thy usual healthy appetite."

Sergey made some slight excuse, and Madame Kartinsky wisely forbore to question him further.

"Sergey, I have a little business matter to communicate to Dolgaretsky," said Ivan Matveitch, as he sat sipping his black coffee after dinner. "I am too rheumatic to venture out to-night, nor do I care to send a servant on so important an errand. Wilt thou take a letter across for me, and this roll of hundred rouble notes, and give the packet into his own hands; mind, Sergey, not through a servant."

"I will go with pleasure, father," replied the young man. "It is a lovely night, and I shall quite enjoy being out."

Away went Sergey, not skating this time, but briskly walking across the lake. He soon reached the other side, delivered his packet to Gregory Abramovitch, shook hands with Olga Vassiliovna, but did not see Katinka, who had gone to bed with a bad headache.

He sat chatting with the old couple for half an hour, then set out on his return walk.

He was skirting Oak Island, which lay right in the most direct route for that part of the opposite shore where his home was situated, when he fancied he saw among the rocks towards the centre of the islet, a sudden flash of light, which, however, was quickly extinguished or hidden.

Recalling to mind then his discovery of the two men, a fragment of whose conversation he had overheard on a previous occasion, when passing the same spot, his curiosity was roused, and instead of continuing his walk across the frozen sheet of water, he began to creep softly round the island, peering in through the snowy bushes and jagged granite boulders, in search of something to explain the sudden appearance of a light in so lonely a place. He had almost described the circle, when he heard a startled exclamation, the bushes and underbrush cracked under a heavy footstep, and the glare of a bull's-eye lantern flashed full upon his face, and blinded him for the moment.

"Here he is, Demetri! Here is our Barrin. Earlier than you promised, too, are you not, sir? Well, there is work to be done, and the less time lost the better. But now that you are here, Barrin, be so good as to tell us how to begin, and where to put the treasure when we have got it."

Sergey, astonished beyond measure, made no reply, and the other man, Demetri, stepping up, took the lantern from his companion's hand, and looked keenly in the young fellow's face.

"Thou prince of fools!" he exclaimed, turning angrily upon Kostia. "What hast thou done? This is not our Barrin." Then changing his tone of mingled rage and apprehension, he added, "Excuse us, sir, we had an appointment with a gentleman to-night, and that donkey Kostia does not know the difference between one man and another."

"*Ach Te Hospadi!* But what could I do?" exclaimed Kostia, deprecatingly. "Is it my fault that the two Barrins are exactly alike?"

"Hush! hold that senseless tongue of thine, if thou canst not talk sense," replied Demetri, savagely. "Sir, we are keeping you from your walk; the sky is clouding over, we shall have snow ere long. Do not let us detain you."

So far, Sergey had not uttered a single word. His astonishment had been too great for speech. But now, as Demetri spoke, a thought flashed across the young man's mind, which for a moment seemed to scathe him like lightning. Quickly succeeding it, however, came the feeling that he must lull suspicion by an indifferent manner, if he would know more of the plot in which he felt assured these men were implicated.

"My good fellows," said he, "at night all men are alike, and what more easy than to make a mistake! Good night to you *Rebiata*, and may your next visitor be the right man!"

So saying, he left them, and walked away until he reached another little islet formed by one tall spiral rock which rose straight out of the water, and looked like a huge cone. Behind this he remained for about fifteen minutes, so that the men should think he had really gone. By this time the moon was quite obscured, and he could feel sure that if he returned to Oak Island by a roundabout route, he might do so unperceived.

Had Sergey yielded to his inclinations, he would have gone home, and left Oak Island to take care of itself, for a great dread was upon the young man's heart, a dread of what he might discover. The fact of the man Kostia having seen a strong likeness between him and the gentleman he was expecting, had suggested to his mind a most painful idea, but he felt he must know more, whether to prove that his fears were groundless, or to face the worst, or possibly to prevent the worst from happening.

He stole along in the shadow of the shore some little way, then struck off across the lake, so as to approach the island on the opposite side from that on which he had encountered Demetri and Kostia.

In the deepening darkness of the cloudy night he trod noiselessly up, and hid himself under a great rock that overhung the ice, forming a kind of roof over his head, and screening him entirely from any one upon the island, while it did not prevent his peeping out from under it and seeing what might be going on, either on the lake or upon Oak Island itself.

Close by him the voices of the men were distinctly to be heard, and Sergey listened breathlessly.

"It is more than time, Demetri. I should not wonder if, after all, he gave us the slip; what sayest thou?"

"That he dare not!" muttered Demetri, in a menacing tone. "But if he should, we will try and do the work on our own account, and be all the richer."

"But thou hast forgotten," said Kostia, "he alone can gain us admittance without noise, for he has the key. There is too much risk in the whole affair unless we have his aid, and unless we can be sure that his safety is bound up in ours."

"Enough! Cease this prating, thou sheep's-head!" snarled Demetri. "If thou art afraid of the danger, go home at once; I will say not a word to detain thee. But why waste we words? See, there he comes! A plague on that moon! Good evening, Barrin; you are late."

A tall figure, wrapped in a *shoob*, paused on the frozen surface of the lake, within a few feet of Sergey's hiding-place; then sprang on to the island, jumping from stone to stone towards the centre. And as he stood there for a moment, and returned the greeting of the two men, his fur collar dropped away from about his face, the moon shone out clear and full, and Sergey recognised his brother.

The shock, though he partly prepared for it was, was very great, and for a few minutes he felt too much overpowered to hear or see anything further. Presently, however, his attention was arrested by the movements of Nicolai, who, after a whispered conversation with the men, stepped down once more on to the ice, followed closely by his companions.

(To be continued.)

NOVELTIES IN DECORATION.

As the most trifling details go to make up the sum total of greater things, so in a pretty room it is more often the arrangement of the unimportant trifles that strikes the eye agreeably, than the expensive furniture that it may contain. In fact, in some rooms where money without stint has been spent upon tables, carpet, pictures, etc., and all are of the best, the result is anything but pleasing, and the *tout ensemble* not half so good as in other rooms where much less costly articles are to be found, but much taste and ingenuity expended.

Fashion, which sincethe earliest ages has ruled mos t things, twenty years ago decreed that a suite of furniture covered in damask, Berlin wool work, green rep, or other material, accompanied by a round table in the centre of the room, and a large looking-glass over the mantelpiece, with a few ornaments and pictures, should be the correct furnishing for a drawing-room, now declares that that style is all a mistake. The table, if not convenient to remove altogether, must be moved to a corner of the room ; and the chairs, from standing stiffly against the wall, are to be arranged about the room with studied carelessness. If possible, each one should be different, but if this is impracticable variety can be obtained by various tasteful little chair backs.

The old fashion of having pairs of mirrors, brackets, etc., has quite gone out, and now the object aimed at in the arrangement of a room is to have no two things alike, so that if any one possesses a pair of handsome vases, they must on no account be placed to correspond with one another upon a cabinet, but should be placed, if possible, at different sides of the room. Fashion also says that walls are to be decorated profusely with pictures, draperies, brackets, plaques, china, and all sorts of curious and artistic articles ; and that rooms are to be crowded with ornamental trifles of every description.

Now these little additions to a room are frequently of little value in themselves, yet they add greatly to the prettiness of the general effect, and in these days of international exhibitions, many ideas for home decoration may be carried out without a great deal of trouble or expense. It is not always easy to attain that variety which is so charming, therefore some of my readers may be interested to hear of novelties which have lately been brought out, and only require average skill and taste to make at home ; and both boys and girls can help in the work, which is in itself an advantage during holiday times.

For instance, an artistic-looking screen has been cleverly made from an ordinary clothes-horse. To make two screens *three* clothes-horses are required (if of two leaves), each one size smaller than the other. The probable cost would be 2s., 2s. 6d., and 3s. each. They are plain deal, the hinges being made of webbing. These are unhinged, then one leaf of each is rehinged to a smaller leaf, and this to another smaller still, when the result is two three-leaved screens of graduated size. When hinging the leaves together use small brass hinges, which can be bought for a few pence, in place of the webbing ones. The upper panels are then covered with American cloth (2s. 6d. a yard, a wide width, in many tints), on which should be painted some pretty design. The lower panels should be covered with fulled pongee silk. The American cloth should be nailed on with small brass-headed nails, and the back covered in the same way, or pretty cretonne stretched tightly over the bars, which also should be turned in at the edge and nailed on. The wood-work that shows should then be painted with Aspinall's enamel (10½d. a tin), which can be procured in any shade. Three coatings are required ; lay the paint on very smoothly,

Home Decorators.

and rub each coat, *when perfectly dry*, with pumice stone, and the result will exactly resemble enamel.

If you cannot paint on the American cloth, red and gold Japanese leather paper makes a handsome covering; a wide width may be had for 4s. a yard. But if this is too expensive, a covering of Liberty's Indian red arras, 9½d. a yard, with a narrow border of Knowles' beautiful raised red and gold bordering, 2s. 3d. a yard, would also look very well.

A very pretty nursery screen was made in the following manner from a clothes-horse, costing 2s. 6d. It was rehinged first with brass hinges, then on one side over both leaves was stretched by glue strong unbleached calico. When quite dry, pictures were arranged on the calico so as to completely cover it. The pictures were taken from children's books, rhymes, fables, fairy tales, etc.; all were coloured and had gold backgrounds. These pictures were an endless source of amusement, but the books from which they were taken were rather difficult to get, on account of the gold backgrounds, especially as not much money could be spent, but eventually they were found in a small shop. When all the pictures were on, a pretty piece of cretonne was stretched over the back, and the wood-work Aspinalled in the manner I have described. This idea could easily be carried out at little expense, and would be a nice way of occupying many a dull winter's evening.

Coverlids are very fashionable just now. A new one is made of coarse linen sheeting, with a bold design of lilies and leaves on it in gold-coloured sateen, worked in thick silk of two shades deeper. The design is traced on to the sateen, which is then tacked down to the sheeting. The outline of design is then worked round in chain stitch. The sateen has then to be cut away all round the design, and the outline finished off with long stitches, like cramped herring-boning. The veining of the leaves is done in long crewel stitches. A broad band of sateen is put on as a border all round, forming a good finish. Another warm and handsome counterpane is composed of coarse brown blanketing, on which is worked, in worsteds, a bold design of poppies and their dark blue-green leaves. The design may be only outlined in chain stitch, or filled in with crewel stitch. The work is easy, pleasant, and quickly done, as no fine stitches are required. Coverlids of pretty, large-patterned, rich-coloured cretonnes or sateen, are also popular, with a broad band of velveteen.

Wall pockets of every kind are made of Japanese and Chinese fans and screens of every description. The Chinese fans often have the sides fastened together to form a kind of horn, and this may either be fastened to an easel to hold a small pot of fern or trailing ivy, or may be hung on the wall with a small glass of grasses or flowers. The easel looks pretty if draped with soft pongee silk. A corner wall pocket to hold dried grasses or berries is formed of two palm-leaf screens, put back to back, while the fronts are curved together to make the pocket. These are easily contrived, and are often just the thing to fill up an odd corner. Sometimes these screens are adapted for holding feather whisks, which are now often to be found in the most elegant drawing-rooms. The sides of the screens are curved round to the front, so that they overlap, leaving a hole just large enough to take the handle of the whisk. Ribbon of two different shades of one colour is made into two bows, one sewn on near the top, and the second at the point, and this is sufficient decoration for these fanciful pockets.

BELLA JOHNSON.

IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH.

BY EDITH A. BARNETT,

Joint-Author of "Our Nurses."

PART II.—FEVERS.

IT is a matter of common knowledge that the tendency to catch fevers runs in families; that children are much more liable to feverish attacks than adults; and that after middle life such attacks are comparatively rare. It is not so generally perceived that the word "fever" is used to cover a number of different ideas. It is one thing to "catch" a fever such as measles or scarlatina, and another to have brain-fever or low-fever, which are not to be "caught" in the ordinary meaning of that word; and both these are different from feverishness that accompanies a bad cold, or such as many children and some adults are liable to on the smallest disturbance of mind or body. Fever means a greater heat than is natural to the body, and is apt to accompany almost all complaints that are serious. The natural heat of the body is 98·4 Fahrenheit, and anything above this is fever, slight or serious, temporary or continued as the case may be It means one of two things, either that the body is working hard to throw off some poison, or that the skin is unable to regulate the heat of the body. People who readily become feverish have not absorbed poison every time that this symptom shows itself. A broken limb, a fright, over-fatigue, is often followed by some fever during the night. The shock to the nerve centres has prevented the nerves in the skin from working healthily, and the patient is now hot, now shivering with cold. Some children are sure to be very feverish if they take cold, or upset their stomachs. They have a flaccid, flabby skin, covering as well as lining their bodies, and it shows itself in colds and stomach-ache and diarrhœa, as well as in moist hands, frequent perspirations, and uncertain temperature. One common belief about the fevers that are caught must not be overlooked. It is possible, and even common, for people to take the same fever twice. Many have measles and scarlet fever twice. On the other hand, it is not necessary to have any one of those unpleasant complaints, and therefore it is most foolish to run into danger of infection with a view to "getting it over and done with once for all."

Fevers most readily attack those whose skin, outside the body and in, is in a state of chronic weakness or ill-health. The obvious moral is that anything that keeps the skin in good health and activity preserves from fevers. I write this on the shores of the Bay of Naples, where English people often get attacks of low or nervous fever. Such attacks would be far less common if they bore my simple moral in mind. To bathe plentifully, rubbing the skin with some stimulating or antiseptic soap; to eat sparingly of rich or heating foods which can only tend to overwork and irritate the digestive canal; to guard against sudden chills, driving the blood to

the internal organs; to avoid excessive sight-seeing, and the consequent nerve exhaustion—these are the necessary precautions. Much the same may be said to those who are obliged to run risk of infectious fever at home. Plenty of food, and that of the simplest and most digestible character; a diet carefully chosen to avoid either constipation or looseness of the bowels; baths either hot or cold, with some simple disinfectant; avoidance as far as possible of overwork or worry; the greatest number of hours in the freshest and purest air; well-ventilated bedroom; these are simple things enough, but as a rule all-sufficient for the purpose. Nor will these common, sensible rules, steadfastly persevered in, fail in the long run to eradicate, as far as may be, a constitutional tendency to feverish attacks. Children thus wisely trained grow out of the habit of catching whatever they come across.

Of course, every slight rise of temperature is not a serious symptom. General rules in cases like these always admit many exceptions; but it is generally true to say that a temperature of 100 degrees, *if continued*, is serious; not that such a temperature is in itself dangerous, but that it forebodes evil. Temperature of 104 or 105 always means considerable danger; but in such cases a doctor will certainly be in daily attendance, and using such means as may seem suitable for reducing the temperature.

In all cases of fever, from whatever cause, whether severe or slight, solid food should never be given. It cannot be digested, and overloading the stomach only increases the trouble. The fever must be got rid of before food can be used. But cooling drinks should be given freely, for they help to prevent the thickening of the blood, which often leads to serious complications. Some discretion must be used in selecting the most suitable drink; *pure* water always, milk generally, weak broths and fruit drinks when there is no diarrhœa, rice-water except when a laxative is required.

In all cases of fever, the patient needs absolute quiet. Whatever was the cause, his nerves are unable to work well. He must have no noises, no work, and no worry until the fever has passed.

In all cases, fresh air in abundance is necessary for quick recovery. The patient must be kept from cold or chill, but he must not be kept in a stuffy room, and fresh air must surround him. That cannot be if he is dirty, or if the bed and furniture are not well-aired and clean, or if anything foul or ill-smelling is allowed to remain in his neighbourhood.

In all cases, too, if you can get the skin to act freely, you have done much; and the sooner you can bring about this desirable result the better. If you can get your patient into a perspiration the first night that he is taken bad, you will often prevent a serious illness from following, and natural perspiration often shows a favourable crisis in the disease.

In all fevers the patient must be kept clean for his own sake, and in infectious fevers scrupulous care and cleanliness are necessary to prevent the spread of the disease. The spread can be prevented, as there is abundant evidence to show, but complete and immediate disinfection of *everything* that has come from, or has touched the patient at any stage of his illness is the only means of prevention. Minute pains, unwearying patience, and, above all, order and method are very necessary to the fever nurse, who, if she has not these qualities, will assuredly give herself double trouble, and will probably leave half her work undone, and so have to begin all over again with a fresh case. Nothing must be forgotten in this work of disinfection. Nothing must be passed over as too small to be worth notice. Nothing must be put away dirty. The cook who wants her kitchen to be a credit to her, must clean as she goes on; she must not leave all her cloths and utensils in a dirty heap until a convenient moment presents itself. Cleaning under such mismanagement becomes a toil and a nuisance. The same things taken singly as they come, get finished as part of the daily routine without any trouble at all. Just so the nurse. It is quite a secondary consideration what disinfectants shall be used. Some nurses like one, and some another. Perhaps Jeyes' and Sanitas are on the whole the best, because they are not poisonous, do not stain, are made in many convenient forms, and are quite pleasant to use. Jeyes' has the further advantage of being very cheap. We must never forget that however good bought disinfectants are, they are to be used as well as, not instead of, fresh air, pure water, sunshine, and heat, all of which are Nature's disinfectants and the very best.

I was saying above that though people do sometimes, they do not generally, have any one of the catching complaints twice. This sort of illness does not usually repeat itself. But it does leave behind, very often, a tendency to other kinds of illness, and they repeat themselves, or even last on and become chronic; so that a bad attack of fever seldom leaves a patient in as healthy a condition as it found him. I do not say that this need be the case. I only say that it is. And what I want to do is to point out why these illnesses, which do not seem to have much to do with fevers, so often follow them, and how we can prevent such a bad state of things.

In nine cases out of ten the patient suffers because he went back to his daily life and work too soon. He was tired of being an invalid. He could ill afford the expense of sickness. Perhaps he wanted to begin earning once more. It was the very old story of "most haste, worst speed." Even looked at from a monetary point of view, prolonged invalidism and ill-health are far more costly than a short sharp attack of disease. "The strength of a chain is that of its weakest link," says another proverb. Our convalescent breaks down wherever he is weakest, or, in other words, that organ gives way which has been most severely tried during the illness that is just over. Many a man recovering from a brain attack might have got back his old powers if he had only waited a little, but he thought he could not spare the time for a holiday, and so he now waits to the end of his life, less capable than he might have been, less capable than other men. Another, recovering from typhoid, lacks the patience to move gently for a few months, to sit and look on while other men take violent exercise. As soon as ever he is out of the sick-room he eats whatever he takes a fancy to, whenever it is set before him, and as much as he feels hungry for. And his digestive canal, which is barely convalescent, though he feels so well, breaks down again, and for months or years he has to put up with the nuisance of chronic ulceration or dyspepsia. Or some girl has had scarlet fever or measles, and she insists on going to a dance in a low dress, or getting overheated and sitting in draughts. The bronchitis that she falls ill of is a very simple consequence of chill to her delicate skin, which has only just got over the work of peeling. And bronchitis repeats itself if scarlet fever does not.

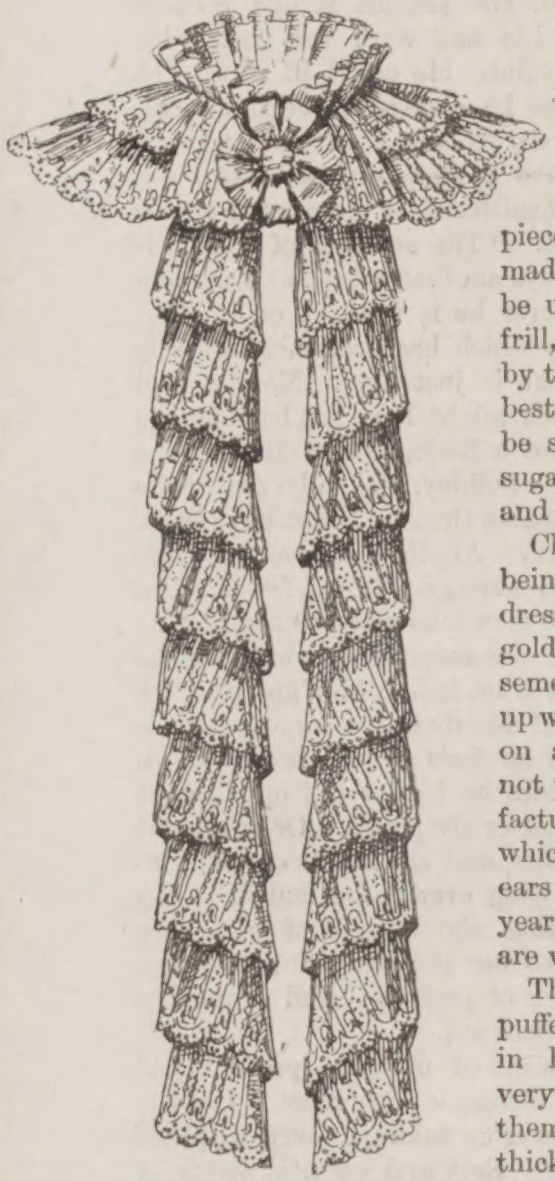
Want of space, and not want of material, prevents me from saying more about convalescence after fever. But the precautions that prevent you from taking a fever, will also help you to recover from one. Rest and warmth, plenty of simple food, plenty of fresh air, are the necessaries in all stages of convalescence.

DRESS AND DRESSMAKING.

April with its changeful skies, its bursts of sunshine and downpours of rain, is a time when we must perforce have our attention drawn to unbrellas and parasols, or still better, to the ever useful *en-tout-cas*, which serves both purposes, and at all events shields the bonnet or hat from injury by rain. The new ones for this season have long handles, yet not so long as those of last year, but about a foot or rather less of the upper part screws off so as to allow the *en-tout-cas* to be packed in a trunk or portmanteau, or to go into a bundle of wraps without sticking out too obtrusively. A ring of handsome fringe or a bow of ribbon is the latest kind of ornament, and where the upper part of the stick is screwed in place it just "clips" the fringe or bow, and being finished off by a metallic ring makes it neat.

There is a new kind of fabric called "Cellular" made in cotton, wool, and silk. It is very light and somewhat open in make, and its texture is based on observation of the cellular tissue of the human skin. The inventor intends it for under-clothing, sheets, etc., and no doubt it will have a large sale; but it is applicable to many other uses. For instance, in wool it makes delightful tennis blouses, and is woven in cream with narrow blue or crimson lines. Both in wool and silk it makes the most charming little children's pelisses, warm and yet light, and also blouse bodices for what may be called semi-dress occasions. The only thing is that most trimmings look tawdry on it, and that only which seems quite suitable is silk tatting or crochet lace.

A very pretty comfort for an elderly lady, and one that has a certain amount of warmth in it, is a lace boa shown in our sketch. Any one looking at it will see the construction; the waterfall arrangement has the lace sewn round and round a piece of stiffish net. It is usually made in black, and two sorts can be used, one for the collar and frill, and the other for the ends, by those who wish to make the best of old stores. Black lace can be stiffened by being dipped in sugar and water (white sugar), and then ironed.



Charming little bonnets are being made of satin to match the dresses, with just an edge of black, gold or cream silk lace or passementerie, and the front filled up with bows of the satin mounted on a fold of velvet. They are not too intricate for home manufacture, and have wide strings which protect the glands of the ears and throat, at a time of the year when with many people they are very susceptible.

The new sleeves are slightly puffed at the upper part, and set in high on the shoulder. A very favourite way of making them in plain material, not too thick, is to cut it rather large, quite at the top, and diminish by running tiny tucks lengthwise to the elbow, or sometimes to the termination of the sleeve. Of course there must be a foundation of lining, and the shape adopted is one often used by good dressmakers, who cut the sleeve in one piece, with only a kind of V taken out of it for the back seam, as far as the joint of the elbow.

A useful dress for this time of year, and one unencumbered with heavy trimming, though quite sufficiently adorned, is made of two shades of grey or brown cashmere, the darker being only used for a deep box-pleated flounce on the foundation. The upper skirt or drapery is simply trimmed all the way round with five rows of narrow silk braid of the darker shade, scarcely more than ¼ inch wide, and stitched on with the sewing machine, and between them are not rows but small diamonds of four or seven beads of the shade called moonlight, sewn on to the cashmere. This is draped from the hips on both sides, falling nearly to the bottom of the skirt, and is caught up behind in such a manner as to be not very *bouffante*. The bodice is not pointed in front, but rounded, and the same behind where the drapery is hooked on to it, and instead of fastening down the front it buttons with small silk buttons, along the left shoulder, round the forearm and down the side seam. This leaves the front plain and without any extra thickness, and it is relieved by a triple festoon of grey silk cord and moonlight beads going right across from an ornament on one shoulder to one on the other. The neck band and cuff of the coat sleeve are trimmed to match the upper skirt.

The high sleeves and puffs threaten to banish jackets, and the fashionable mantles are of the cape kind, large or small, according to the age of the wearer. Sling mantles are still in vogue, and there is a smart elegant cut about them that is absent from the round cape, provided always that the pattern is a good one.

A great many thin dresses, such as lace and silk muslin, have rows of bright coloured ribbon laid under skirts and sleeves, while bows and rosettes bring the bodices into harmony. This is a capital way of reviving and finishing up an old frock.